United Nations S/PV.4003

Security Council

Fifty-fourth Year

Provisional

4003rd Meeting

Friday, 14 May 1999, 11.35 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Dangue Réwaka	(Gabon)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Petrella
	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Moura
	Canada	Mr. Duval
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Burleigh

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998) and 1203 (1998)

99-85378 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.35 p.m.

Expression of sympathy to the victims of the Kosovo crisis

The President (*spoke in French*): At the outset of the meeting, I should like, on behalf of the Council, to express sincere condolences to the bereaved families of all those who have lost their lives since the beginning of the crisis in and around Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. On behalf of the Council, I also wish to convey our deepest sympathy to all the victims of that tragedy. I now invite the members of the Council to stand and observe a minute of silence.

The members of the Council observed a minute of silence.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998) and 1203 (1998)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nesho (Albania), Mr. Sychov (Belarus), Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba), Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt), Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Abu-Nimah (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Zahid (Morocco), Mr. Kamal (Pakistan), Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar), Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Ka (Senegal), Mr. Vural (Turkey), Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine), Mr. El-Ethary (Yemen) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): I have received a request dated 13 May 1999 from Mr. Vladislav Jovanović to be allowed to address the Council in the course of its discussion of the item on its agenda. With the consent of the Council, I would propose to invite him to take a seat at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Jovanović took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 13 May 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour in my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group at the United Nations to request that the Security Council extend an invitation to participate in the discussion without the right to vote under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ahmad Haji Hosseini, Deputy Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, during the Council's discussion on the draft resolution on the humanitarian situation in and around Kosovo."

That letter will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/1999/522. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hosseini.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1999/517, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Egypt, Gabon, the Gambia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Namibia, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovenia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1999/542, which contains the text of a letter dated 6 May 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): The situation in Kosovo was caused by a crisis: the displacement of many inhabitants of the region, people who for the most part are Albanians. These displacements were caused by destructive acts by Belgrade, the burning of the houses and property of Albanians, as well as acts of terror, rape and assassination.

The events that have taken place in Kosovo have reminded us of a similar situation: that which took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This proves that the Serb authorities have not learned any lessons from what happened in Bosnia. The international community has helped the Croats, Serbs and Bosniacs to achieve international legitimacy, but the excesses that caused the tragedy in Bosnia still remain. The Serb authorities in Belgrade have started to act with the same ferocity as they did in Bosnia, and this has led to the displacement of a large number of people in the region.

We are concerned that, as in Bosnia, there are various forms of displacement in this tragic situation unfolding in Kosovo. There are people who have gone to live in the mountains and people who are lost in various areas. Others are scattered throughout the region. Others still are in border areas waiting for the chance to emigrate. And there are those who are refugees in neighbouring States and States yet further away.

If one wishes to cite figures, according to United Nations sources there are more than 840,000 displaced persons within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and more than 700,000 outside that territory. So the total number exceeds 1.5 million people out of a population of two million. This seems to be a way of ridding Kosovo of its population, of destroying its politics, culture and religion.

I don't think we need to go into the military and political factors that have caused this situation in Kosovo, but these factors cannot be separated from the humanitarian crisis. Therefore there is a need for us to try to redress the humanitarian situation — the displacement of the population — and to help the refugees. The situation of a refugee, whoever he may be, touches our hearts.

It is in view of this humanitarian situation that the delegations of Malaysia and Bahrain took the initiative to submit a draft resolution. It has achieved consensus in the Council and in the caucus and other groups of Member States outside of the Council.

The draft resolution was the result of various consultations and was discussed today. The humanitarian efforts are particularly cited in this draft resolution, the purpose of which is two-fold. One goal is to draw the attention of the international community to the humanitarian catastrophe occurring in Kosovo today, a catastrophe that has led to the displacement of thousands of people. The second goal is to make it possible for the Council to review the situation in Kosovo from the humanitarian perspective and to make humanitarian concerns fundamental to the consideration of the military and political aspects of the situation when the Council is ready to do so.

The elements contained in the draft resolution are the same as those found in other United Nations resolutions and in non-United Nations resolutions. They are what is necessary to resolve the problem of refugees. International organizations have a great deal of experience in this field.

The points contained in this draft resolution are as follows. It appeals to States and organizations to contribute resources to help the refugees, facilitating the delivery of assistance and helping the refugees return to their homes after the crisis is over. This humanitarian draft resolution that is now before the Council, while being a simple, caring resolution that does not invite controversy, nonetheless deals with a humanitarian tragedy which has caused the displacement of a large proportion of the Kosovo population.

In keeping with this appeal we call upon Council members to adopt this draft resolution by consensus so that this humanitarian assistance that is so necessary to the refugees can be given to them and so that their situation can be improved pending their return to their homes.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): We are meeting this evening to take action on the draft resolution on the humanitarian situation in and around Kosovo. My delegation is pleased to have played a role, together with

Bahrain, in helping move the process forward, culminating in this formal meeting of the Council. We are grateful for the solid support shown by members of the Council, especially those who have contributed important input and sponsored the draft resolution. We are equally grateful to those countries outside of the Council that have joined in sponsoring this draft resolution.

My delegation is strongly of the view that, in the wake of the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in and around Kosovo, it is timely for the Council to pronounce itself on the subject. We feel that the Council should have been able to adopt a draft resolution on the humanitarian issue, after weeks of paralysis in the Council, even as the international community watched in anguish the plight of the refugees and internally displaced persons.

We are, of course, equally concerned over the ongoing conflict in Kosovo. We share the views already expressed by other members of the international community on the need for an early political settlement. Nothing would have pleased my delegation more than the Council's adopting a resolution which addressed the Kosovo issue in a comprehensive fashion. Efforts are being made by many international actors, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in that direction. It remains our earnest hope that these efforts will yield tangible results and that the Council will be in a position to address the issue in a comprehensive manner as soon as possible. We remain convinced that the issue can be finally resolved only by way of a political solution.

In the meantime, it is also our conviction that the Council can, and ought to, play a meaningful role by pronouncing itself on an important aspect of the Kosovo crisis — namely, the humanitarian situation, which is characterized by the exodus of hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons, who are in a very desperate and traumatized condition in and around Kosovo and other parts of Yugoslavia.

We are of the view that, while there remain fundamental differences among Council members on the political and other aspects of the Kosovo problem, there is universal concern among Council members on the humanitarian tragedy which continues to unfold in and around Kosovo. It is in cognizance of this widely shared concern that the initiative has been taken to bring the issue to the Council for formal action, as a concrete step in the efforts to bring the Kosovo issue to the Council by the least contentious aspect, which should command the support of all members of the Council.

Formal action by the Council on the humanitarian issue in and around Kosovo would be a clear expression of the serious concern of the Council about the humanitarian tragedy which unfolded weeks ago. It would also be an important and positive response to the appeals by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Secretary-General for international humanitarian assistance to alleviate the plight of the refugees and internally displaced persons, not only in and around Kosovo, but also in other parts of Yugoslavia. It would be a welcome expression of the Council's strong support and encouragement of the ongoing efforts made by international organizations that are operating in the region. At the same time, the adoption of the draft resolution would be a strong and unequivocal expression of support for the refugees and internally displaced persons, particularly in respect of their right to return to their homes in security and in dignity.

The Council has not been able to address the issue of Kosovo in any meaningful way for a long time now due to a lack of consensus, which, regrettably, led to action being taken outside the Council. This draft resolution represents the first serious attempt on the part of some Council members to bring the Kosovo issue back to the Council in the earnest hope that it could pave the way for the forging of a consensus on the more difficult aspects of the Kosovo problem, thereby reasserting the role of the Council on this issue. In submitting this draft resolution, the sponsors are impelled by a desire to make a contribution to galvanizing international action in addressing the enormous humanitarian tragedy in and around Kosovo. Equally importantly, it represents a modest contribution by these members towards unifying the Council. We earnestly hope that this will indeed be the case.

Mr. Burleigh (United States of America): The United States supports the draft resolution initiated by our Council colleagues from Bahrain and Malaysia. We thank them and express our appreciation for their efforts. Similar thanks go to the other sponsors of the draft resolution.

This draft resolution focuses our attention on the urgent issue at hand in Kosovo and the surrounding region: the plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons, and the critical need to assist the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian organizations and workers in their efforts to address this crisis.

Slobodan Milosevic is responsible for the humanitarian crisis. It is his campaign of ethnic cleansing, of burning villages, of executing men, women and children and of rape and intimidation that has caused hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. It is clear how this crisis can be resolved: Belgrade must meet the conditions set out by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the principles of the Group of Eight, agreed to at the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Bonn on 6 May. We remain firm in our resolve to continue to exert pressure on Milosevic and his Government to stop their planned, systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing and to permit the return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in safety and in security. All of our efforts in Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are focused on this objective.

The number of Kosovar refugees and displaced persons now exceeds 1 million. Many of the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo have been rendered homeless. The United States has contributed and will continue to contribute to humanitarian relief efforts. My Government is currently building a camp in Fier, Albania, that will house as many as 20,000 Kosovar Albanian refugees. We are working to identify other sites for up to an additional 40,000 refugees. Americans have also opened their doors to these homeless, with the recent arrival of the first of 20,000 Kosovar Albanians for whom we have pledged to provide safe haven. We urge other countries, too, to provide temporary shelter for Kosovar Albanian refugees.

We expect that the Secretary-General's humanitarian mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will focus on the destruction in Kosovo. The mission can greatly assist in preparing for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes. The team can also identify the types of humanitarian food and medical assistance that are most urgently needed. In our view, it is essential that this team have unimpeded access throughout its visit.

I would like to conclude by reiterating a statement made by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the conclusion of the 6 May meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Eight. She said,

> "by standing together, as we do today, our nations offer an alternate vision to Milosevic's campaign of terror, tyranny and vicious intolerance. We are united in urging Belgrade to choose a future of integration, can to make that future a reality."

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): The draft resolution before us illuminates what really matters: the ordinary people who are suffering so greatly in and around Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the people who are trying to look after them. The United Kingdom agrees with those who want to see an early end to the Kosovo crisis. That must come about in a way which enables the citizens of Kosovo who have been displaced from their homes and who have been put through unimaginable horrors to return in safety and long-term security. The Group of Eight proposals show how that can be done. These are the basis on which to move on from crisis to fulfilling the terms of this draft resolution, in favour of which the United Kingdom will vote. It deserves the support of all members of the Security Council.

Mr. Duval (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada unconditionally supports this humanitarian draft resolution, which responds to the grave concerns of the international community about the catastrophic deterioration of the humanitarian situation in and around Kosovo resulting from the merciless action of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada strongly believes that it is entirely appropriate for the Council to be heard on humanitarian issues which clearly threaten international peace and security. We thank the sponsors of this draft resolution, which has engaged the Council in a constructive way to recognize and help improve the situation on the ground.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*spoke in French*): Since the beginning of the tragic events in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the members of the Security Council have on several occasions expressed their great concern. But today for the first time the Council is indicating its feelings and its resolve in a draft resolution. We welcome the initiative taken by non-aligned members of the Council; these members are the source of this necessary and justified taking of a position.

The provisions of the draft resolution are self-explanatory and for the most part require no commentary. They include: support for the efforts of humanitarian organizations — and, as members know, France is playing a role in this undertaking by setting up refugee centres and itself hosting refugees; stress on the need for the coordination of humanitarian activities, with an emphasis on the role of the Office of the United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; and, most important, a reaffirmation of the right of all refugees and displaced persons to return in safety and in dignity.

The French delegation wishes also particularly to stress the importance of one provision of the draft resolution, that of paragraph 5, which emphasizes that the humanitarian situation will continue to deteriorate in the absence of a political solution to the crisis. We are convinced of this. It is striking that this evening the Council is indicating what the parameters of that political solution must be, by specifying that the solution must be consistent with the principles adopted by the Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America on 6 May 1999. Those are the principles that the French delegation set out in its Security Council statement of 8 May. We hope that, as outlined in the draft resolution, these will be endorsed by the Security Council.

For these reasons, the French delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Jagne (Gambia): The tragic humanitarian situation in and around Kosovo, which has been at the top of the international agenda for some time now, continues to unfold. Meanwhile, the policies and practices of ethnic cleansing and deportation also continue unabated. Worse still, there appears to be no end in sight to such practices, which one would think would have been consigned a long time ago to the cesspool of history. It must be recognized, however, that, the urgent need to respond to the humanitarian crisis notwithstanding, the underlying political problems should also be given all the attention that they deserve, because the longer we postpone the search for a durable solution, the longer the suffering of the refugees will continue. There is absolutely no doubt about that. This is why my delegation believes that the principles outlined by the Group of Eight leaders constitute a credible basis for a lasting solution to the Kosovo crisis. We urge all concerned to work towards that aim, as reflected in the draft resolution before the Council. It is our sincere hope that all the refugees will return home to the land of their birth in safety and dignity. But this will remain an dream so long as there is no settlement within the framework of the Group of Eight principles. Those principles offer the best guarantees for creating conditions most conducive to a decent life free from fear and persecution.

At this juncture, my delegation would like to commend the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the wonderful job that it is doing to provide humanitarian assistance to all those in need. We also commend other members of the United Nations family, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the World Food Programme to mention but a few, which are helping to reach out to the needy, sometimes under difficult and dangerous conditions. We also recognize the important contribution of a number of non-governmental organizations in the face of all the risks to which they are exposed. The safety and security of all humanitarian personnel is of major concern to us, and we hope that this concern will always be borne in mind by all wherever they are rendering their selfless services. In this connection, it is necessary to facilitate access for them and to provide assistance to them in carrying out their humanitarian operations.

It is gratifying to note that there is international ownership of the Kosovo humanitarian crisis. But, as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees pointed out the other day, the Security Council should not overlook the humanitarian situation in other parts of the world, notably in Africa, where we have the highest refugee population in the world. We certainly appreciate all the efforts being made to alleviate the suffering of refugees in Africa and elsewhere, but the fact remains that we still need more help. In this regard, another manifestation of the international ownership of refugee crises would be most welcome. We are raising this issue for two main reasons. First, my own country, the Gambia, has been hosting refugees from our subregion for some time now and, secondly, the causes that lead people to seek refuge elsewhere may be different, but the effect is always the same, that is, human suffering, which is the subject of our discussion today.

That is why my delegation joined in sponsoring the draft resolution before us and why we shall vote in its favour.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): A crisis is unfolding in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. What was hoped would be a limited crisis has continued to escalate to frightening proportions. Persecutions, loss of life, destruction of infrastructure and property, as well as environmental damage with possible effect well beyond the borders of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, continue. As a result of ethnic cleansing, as well as of the military action of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), many refugees are finding themselves in neighbouring countries, as well as in other

parts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, far away from their homes, living under deplorable conditions. Similarly, the ongoing military action has severely affected the lives of the people in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

It is in view of the aforementioned that Namibia has joined in cosponsoring the draft resolution under consideration. We wish to emphasize that the human tragedy, which continues to escalate, is such that a political solution has become even more imperative.

My delegation wishes to underscore that the humanitarian situation in and around Kosovo is not a natural phenomenon. It cannot be addressed in isolation from the political context. We wish to reiterate our position in calling for a cessation of hostilities. Only then can we meaningfully address the humanitarian situation. In this connection, we reiterate that the Security Council should reassert its authority over the situation that is now unfolding in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a whole.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China is deeply disturbed by the current humanitarian crisis in the Balkans and has profound sympathy for the over 700,000 Kosovar refugees who have been left homeless and separated from their loved ones. We have a saying in China: "Nothing on Earth is more precious than human life and no benevolence is greater than that which treasures life." I believe that, to each and every one of us, there is no place like home. The pain of having one's home ravaged can hardly be put into words. We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international relief agencies for the tremendous relief work they have done.

What is equally of concern to us is that, bypassing the United Nations and without the authorization of the Security Council, the United States-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has launched military attacks against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and thus unleashed a regional war in the Balkans. Over the past 52 days, this war, conducted in the name of humanitarianism, has created the largest humanitarian disaster since the Second World War. Residents within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia — including Serbs, ethnic Albanians, Hungarians, Slovaks and other ethnic minorities — are living in miserable and inhuman conditions. Oil refineries and chemical plants have been levelled by NATO bombs. As a result, poisonous gas and pollutants are threatening the health and lives of hundreds of millions, especially children, in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Europe at large.

All the bridges over the Danube in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have been destroyed. Water and electricity supplies have been cut off and television stations seem to have become legitimate bombing targets. The national economy and infrastructure of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have been devastated, resulting in a large number of civilian casualties. In this connection, I cannot fail to mention that, even as the Security Council deliberated today on the draft resolution on the Balkans, another tragedy took place in Kosovo. Six missiles launched by NATO hit a refugee camp in south-western Kosovo, causing over 100 deaths and more than 50 injuries. The tragedy was horrific, the area being strewn with dead bodies. These refugees were on their way home. We express shock at this incident. I repeat: We are shocked by this latest incident.

We believe that, in addressing the crisis in various regions in the Balkans, the Security Council should not apply double standards.

While stepping up its bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, NATO has brazenly attacked the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. 8 May 1999 was an extremely painful day that the 1.2 billion Chinese people will never forget. On that day, the United States-led NATO ferociously attacked the Chinese Embassy in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with five missiles. Three people in the Embassy were killed and more than 20 injured. The Embassy building was severely damaged. Such a criminal act is a flagrant encroachment on China's sovereignty and a serious violation of the international law and norms governing international relations. It has aroused great indignation among the Chinese people. The Chinese Government issued a solemn statement that very morning, strongly condemning this barbaric act of NATO. This tragedy shocked the international community and met with worldwide condemnation.

Despite the tragic incident of the bombing of the Chinese Embassy that caused death and injury to Chinese diplomats, NATO is still saying that its air campaign will continue. Such perversity in NATO has outraged the entire world and should be strongly condemned by everyone who has reason and conscience. As a victim, China has every reason, on moral and legal grounds alike, to demand that NATO immediately and unconditionally stop the bombing. Are not the shedding of blood and loss of life of Chinese diplomats tragic

enough to restore NATO to sanity? As a permanent member of the Security Council, China shoulders unshirkable responsibilities in upholding justice and safeguarding peace. In our view, it is illogical for NATO to continue with the bombing campaign while talking about the return and relief of refugees. An immediate cessation of NATO's bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should be the prerequisite for any political solution to the Kosovo issue and also the minimum condition for alleviating the humanitarian crisis in the Balkans.

For these reasons, the Chinese delegation put forward constructive amendments to the draft resolution and proposed to add to it such words as "there must be an immediate cessation of all military activities". It should be stated that this was called for also in the Non-Aligned Movement's statement of 9 April. However, this important position of the Chinese side was not accepted; we find this most regrettable. We note also that the draft resolution refers to the principles adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the G-8. We cannot accept that the Council has prejudged those principles in its draft resolution without first deliberating on them, and therefore we deem it necessary to express our reservations. On the basis of these considerations, the Chinese delegation has no choice but to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

NATO's bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has resulted in a number of horrifying incidents involving civilian casualties. People cannot but wonder how many more innocent civilians will have to fall victim to so-called collateral damage. Will more diplomats lose their lives under NATO missiles? What has NATO done in the name of humanitarianism? Among the three persons killed in the bombing of Chinese Embassy were a young couple married less than a year ago. The father of the woman wrote a letter to President Clinton that said:

> "Two innocent young people were killed by your bombs, thus deprived of their right to live. Back in Beijing, my wife spends her days and nights crying and waiting for her daughter and son-in-law, who will never return. Our son-in-law's mother lives in the remote countryside of Jiangsu Province. She passed out upon receiving the tragic news. The happiness of my whole family was destroyed in the twinkling of an eye. As a father, a human being and a longtime human rights advocate, how do you feel about having created such a tragedy?"

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The tragic course of events in Yugoslavia since 24 March last has shown convincingly that it is precisely the military action against that sovereign country — which is being conducted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in circumvention of the Security Council and in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and other generally recognized norms of international law — that has caused this humanitarian catastrophe and has created a real emergency situation in the Balkans region.

For more than a month and a half now, an unprecedented campaign of air strikes by NATO against Yugoslavia has been taking place, whose victims, with grim regularity, are innocent civilians — more than 1,200 so far. There has been much testimony about the severe humanitarian damage caused by the NATO bombing, which dispels the myth that the Alliance is conducting its military operation in the name of high humanitarian ideals.

It is hard to contradict well-known facts. The number of civilians and refugees killed or wounded continues to grow. Systematically and deliberately, the civilian infrastructure of Yugoslavia is being destroyed, and very serious damage is being done to its economy. The whole region is threatened by a huge environmental catastrophe. The material basis for the return of the refugees and the displaced persons to their homes is being destroyed, though NATO proclaims that the resolution of the problem of refugees is one of its main tasks.

It is difficult to remain indifferent in the face of the escalating humanitarian catastrophe in and around Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is clear, however, that this is a consequence, not a cause, of the crisis situation. It is precisely with regard to the causes of the humanitarian catastrophe that the Security Council should have spoken out, as a matter of priority, as the organ bearing primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Unfortunately, because of the well-known position of a number of its members, the Council was unable to take a stand on NATO's illegal military action and to demand an immediate halt to the bombing and the return of the Kosovo crisis to the track of a peaceful political settlement. Upon the initiative of the Russian delegation, the draft resolution submitted to the Council took on board an important conclusion: that the humanitarian

situation would continue to deteriorate unless a political settlement to the crisis could be ensured.

Just as important is the urgent appeal to all concerned to make every effort to arrive at this agreement. There is no alternative, and there is a growing understanding of this fact, as was clearly shown by the adoption by the Foreign Ministers of the G-8 of general principles on a political settlement of the Kosovo crisis. The draft resolution, however, did not take into account a number of our other amendments, of which the main one was an appeal for an immediate cessation of the NATO air strikes on Yugoslavia, adamantly supported by Russia and China.

A few days ago, the world was shaken by the barbaric bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade and the death of several of its staff members. Today we learned of another terrible tragedy, which occurred in the Kosovo village of Korisa as a result of NATO's use of proscribed cluster bombs. At least 50 people died there, primarily women, children and the elderly, and more than 100 were wounded.

As was stressed in the statement published today by the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Russia, which repeatedly warned NATO's leadership about the dire consequences of the military action against Yugoslavia, strongly condemns this new crime by the Alliance and calls upon the NATO strategists immediately to halt this insanity. A settlement of the Kosovo problem is possible only at the negotiating table.

Unless there is an immediate cessation to the illegal military action by NATO, genuine progress will be impossible, either towards a political settlement of the crisis or to overcome this humanitarian catastrophe. Furthermore, continued bombing could lead to that catastrophe's spreading throughout the entire Balkan region. Unfortunately, this obvious fact was not reflected in the text because of the negative position adopted by a number of Council members.

We must note here that once again, narrow national interests and an unwillingness properly to assess and react to real threats to the physical survival of an entire population of a sovereign State and to the tragic fate of hundreds of thousands of refugees have prevailed over the Charter obligations of certain members of the Council.

Because of the principled nature of our position, the Russian delegation cannot support this text. The Russian Federation, together with its active efforts to promote a peaceful political settlement of the Kosovo crisis, will continue to give whatever humanitarian assistance it can on an impartial, non-discriminatory basis to the needy civilian population in Kosovo, other regions of Yugoslavia and neighbouring States.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1999/517.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, France, Gabon, Gambia, Malaysia, Namibia, Netherlands, Slovenia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:

China, Russian Federation

The President (*spoke in French*): The result of the voting is as follows: 13 in favour, none against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1239 (1999).

I would note for the record that the time of adoption of the resolution was 11.59 p.m., on 14 May 1999.

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina)(*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to note that our co-sponsorship of the resolution that has just been adopted, put forward by Bahrain and Malaysia, is in keeping with Argentina's commitment to defending human rights in all parts of the world, wherever they may be under assault. The fact that the tragic situation that prompted us to hold this meeting today should be taking place in Europe heightens our concern, since this appears to mean that neither development nor education nor tradition nor historical experience renders us immune to humanitarian catastrophes of this kind.

In our opinion, this resolution sets out to give impetus to specific relief and assistance action, in the

affected countries, which definitely include the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The statements made two days ago by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights upon visiting the region make further comments unnecessary.

Finally, as we said in earlier statements, there must be a prompt political solution to the crisis brought on by a humanitarian disaster that has already cost many lives and caused much suffering. The members of the Council agree that diplomacy is the best instrument with which to achieve that objective. Hence the importance of operative paragraph 5 and the exhortation to all parties to contribute to the objective stated therein.

Finally, I wish to call for United Nations staff and other humanitarian workers in the territories and countries involved in this grave conflict to be given the necessary protection in accordance with the relevant international conventions. In this context, we wish respectfully to ask the Yugoslav Government to release the Australian humanitarian workers.

Mr. Moura (Brazil): The humanitarian situation in and around Kosovo is a matter of universal concern. The Security Council is quite aware of the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people in the Balkans. We had hoped, therefore, that the dramatic humanitarian situation in the region would lead to a consensual response on the part of the Council.

The stated purpose of this resolution, which Brazil co-sponsored and for which we worked together with the members of the Non-Aligned Movement caucus, was to serve as a bridge between positions and to help build unity within the Council in responding to the crisis in Kosovo. In this respect, we insist both on the linkage between the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and on the absence of a political solution to the crisis and a reaffirmation of the role of the Security Council in the search for that solution.

While we regret that a full convergence of views was not possible over the terms of the resolution, we are pleased that the Council was able to adopt the resolution, the main thrust of which is to support unconditionally the efforts of the United Nations and humanitarian agencies in assisting the needs of the thousands of people in distress all over the region. It does not address the crucial question of a final resolution of the conflict, as the elements for that, unfortunately are not yet in the hands of the Council.

I wish to underline the importance of the step taken tonight by the Council and to express the hope that this expression of common concern will help us achieve in the near future greater involvement by the Security Council in the political resolution of the Kosovo crisis.

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council has thus completed its voting procedure.

In accordance with the decision taken earlier in the meeting, I invite Mr. Jovanović to make his statement.

Mr. Jovanović: In its latest ferocious attack, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) aeroplanes bombed refugees in Korisa, near Prizren, and killed over 80 civilians, predominantly children, women and elderly people who were returning to their homes in Kosovo, in Metohija. Many were wounded, 58 seriously. Is this tragedy going to be once again cynically interpreted as collateral damage of NATO humanitarian bombings? How many more innocent victims have to die before the international community and the Security Council react by condemning and stopping this brutal NATO aggression against Yugoslavia and insisting on a political solution?

The aggression of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, now in its fifty-first day, is continuing, expanding and intensifying. It is a gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of international relations. Notwithstanding many requests by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Security Council took no steps to uphold the Charter of the United Nations, to prevent the arrogation of its authority and the violations of international peace and security. Had this legitimate request been heeded, vast human suffering and material destruction would have been avoided.

NATO's campaign of terror and devastation targets civilians, infrastructure and the economy, inflicting a humanitarian catastrophe on the 11 million citizens of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. So far more than 1,200 people have been killed and more than 5,000 wounded, while more than 300 schools, dozens of hospitals and a great number of civilian factories, bridges, railways, public roads, churches and cultural and historical monuments have been destroyed. NATO's strikes against downtown Nis and Belgrade have caused many civilian deaths, while entire city blocks, marketplaces, hospitals and even foreign diplomatic missions have been destroyed

or damaged. This is telling proof that NATO is perpetrating a deliberate and premeditated genocide in an attempt to intimidate the population and erode its morale, which stands in the way of NATO's conquest and occupation.

NATO bombs have caused an ecological disaster in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in the region. My country has informed many United Nations specialized agencies about this disaster. NATO is increasingly using weapons banned by the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, of 10 October 1980. These weapons include cluster bombs, which afflict children the most, depleted uranium ammunition and graphite bombs aimed at short-circuiting the power grid of the country. NATO has caused deliberate, indescribable suffering, especially to the most vulnerable segments of the population, such as pregnant women, babies in incubators, the hospitalized and the elderly.

The most recent estimates put the damage done by NATO bombs at more than $100 billion. The destruction of much of the Yugoslav industry has rendered half a million people jobless, and more than 2 million are without any source of income whatsoever. The indirect damage from the enforced halts in production cannot be calculated.

As we all witnessed, only a few days ago the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Belgrade also fell prey to this reign of terror and twilight of reason. Three persons were killed, and a large number were wounded. This act of barbarism is without precedent in the recent history of international relations and constitutes a flagrant violation of the 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents.

NATO has flagrantly violated international conventions and covenants on human rights and freedoms, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. In destroying radio and television stations in my country, NATO is trying to prevent the public around the world from being informed about the shameful campaign and is trying to impose its own mendacious propaganda as the only and the whole truth.

NATO has cited its concern for protecting the Albanian national minority from alleged mistreatment and ethnic cleansing by Serbian security forces as a post-facto pretext for its aggression. The best evidence of the fallacy of this claim is the humanitarian situation before and after the NATO bombs began to fall. Refugees took to the roads as soon as the first bomb was dropped. Of all the mayhem wrought to date, one of the worst incidents was on 14 April, when a convoy of refugees returning to their homes in response to a public appeal by the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was struck along the Djacovica road. Seventy-five civilians were killed and more than 40 were wounded. NATO bombs have also hit many refugee camps, killing Serbs expelled from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. More than 100 people — primarily women, children and the elderly — have been killed in those camps. So these people's sad and sorry exodus ended in a most tragic and careless fashion. Regrettably the draft resolution makes no mention of these tragic consequences of the NATO aggression.

The concern of the Security Council about the humanitarian situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is justified. However, the attempt to legalize the aggression of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization against my country by means of this so-called humanitarian resolution is unjustified. The bypassing of the Security Council, the body charged with the maintenance of international peace and security, prior to the commencement of the aggression, and the subsequent attempts to get the Council on board in order to legalize the aggression deal a heavy blow to the reputation of the United Nations and sets a dangerous precedent for international relations in general.

The draft resolution must, therefore, contain a demand by the Security Council that the NATO aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia be stopped immediately and unconditionally. For without addressing the causes, no success will be achieved in addressing the consequences. The sooner this is understood, the quicker the solution will be found for all the problems caused by the unprovoked and unauthorized attack by the United States of America and its NATO confederates against the independent and sovereign Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): I would like to comment briefly on the statement of the speaker before me.

The present conflict will one day come to an end, but if Serbia wants to be part of Europe it will at last have to start realizing why it has been subjected to

NATO air strikes. One day the Serbian people will have to understand that our intervention on account of the atrocities committed by the Serbian security forces and the Yugoslav army in Kosovo would probably not have been possible if it had not been preceded by almost eight years of ethnic cleansing, carried out in the name of the Serbian nation, first in the Krajina in East Slavonia, then in Bosnia and finally in its ultimate form in Kosovo.

Were it not for our accumulated disgust at this practice, we might not have had the courage to act.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): It is a pleasure to see you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council today as it meets on an issue of serious concern to the international community.

Allow me to begin by expressing the deep regret and concern of the Government and people of Pakistan over the damage and destruction caused to the Chinese Embassy during the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air strikes in Belgrade and the resultant deaths and injuries of the Chinese nationals. We extend our sincerest condolences to the Government and people of the People's Republic of China and to the bereaved families.

The massive human tragedy which has unfolded in Kosovo is a source of deep distress and anxiety for the people of Pakistan, as it is for people all over the world. The reign of terror let loose by the Serbian forces in Kosovo has resulted in the killing of a large number of civilians, including women, children and the elderly. As a result of Belgrade's relentless, premeditated policy of ethnic cleansing, over 1 million people have now fled Kosovo into neighbouring countries, thousands are internally displaced, and numerous women and children have been separated from their menfolk. This mass exodus must be stopped and the suffering of the refugees must be alleviated through determined international efforts.

Pakistan has made a modest contribution to the relief efforts and will continue to do so in whatever way possible. The Government of Pakistan has made a contribution of $5 million to help the Kosovar refugees. In addition, four relief flights carrying tents, food and medicine have been dispatched to assist in the humanitarian efforts, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and non-governmental organizations operating in the area. Some medical personnel are also being dispatched to the region to support international efforts.

It is shocking that, so soon after Bosnia, we are witnessing yet another campaign of genocide and ethnic cleansing being perpetrated by the same regime. The Belgrade authorities are pursuing systematic and deliberate policies of hatred and intolerance, aimed at decimating and uprooting a whole community for its ethnic origin and beliefs. Only four years ago, while addressing the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international community vowed not to allow the recurrence of such a heinous crime against humanity anywhere in the world. The perpetrators of such crimes must not go unpunished.

Pakistan has been closely following the Kosovo situation. The Prime Minister of Pakistan recently visited the refugee camps in Tirana to have first-hand information about the suffering of the innocent Kosovars. As part of the visit to Tirana, he had stopovers in Baku, Rome and Ankara, where he exchanged views with the leaders on the Kosovo crisis. During an official visit to Moscow last month, the Prime Minister held discussions with the Russian leadership on the issue. Also at Pakistan's initiative, a ministerial meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosova was convened in Geneva last month. This meeting adopted a comprehensive declaration on the issue and was followed up by visits to Moscow, Rome, Bonn and Tirana by a ministerial delegation of the Contact Group.

In all these contacts and forums, Pakistan emphasized the need for the Security Council to address the crisis effectively and, in particular, stressed the urgency of establishing a United Nations peacekeeping force in Kosovo. The inability of the Security Council to take effective action and to carry out its Charter responsibility has been a matter of deep concern to us. Its failure to address the issues of international peace and security in the past has only aggravated conflicts and human tragedies, as we in South Asia know well.

We hope that the Security Council will soon address the Kosovo crisis comprehensively and facilitate an early implementation of last week's decision by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Seven industrialized nations and Russia to establish a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Kosovo. The Security Council must endorse the proposals which, among other things, would pave the

way for a verifiable end to violence and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, the withdrawal of Yugoslav military, police and paramilitary forces, the establishment of an interim administration in the province, the safe and free return of refugees and a political settlement providing self-government for Kosovo. Pakistan has already expressed its willingness to contribute to the United Nations peacekeeping efforts, as and when authorized by the Security Council, in fulfilling its Charter responsibility.

As a sponsor of the resolution, Pakistan supports the measures adopted by the Security Council on the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker is the representative of Qatar. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Nasser (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the State of Qatar, and in my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group here in New York, it gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on you presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. We are confident that your wisdom and diplomatic expertise will assist us in achieving the results that we desire.

The international community has been shocked by the inhumane practices against the Kosovars. They represent a stark violation of human rights, of all international covenants and conventions, and of the lofty and noble objectives of such conventions. The killing, destruction, rape, displacement and ethnic cleansing perpetrated by the Serbian forces in Kosovo are an affront to humanity — an affront that will continue into the new millennium unless efforts are made to put an end to this tragic situation, punish the perpetrators and bring them to justice in accordance with international law, which punishes such acts of genocide.

The suffering of the thousands of refugees in neighbouring States makes it incumbent upon us to act as quickly as possible so as to put an end to it. This suffering constitutes an additional burden on neighbouring States. We urge States, humanitarian organizations and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to increase their humanitarian assistance to refugees and to the displaced civilians, as well as to other victims in and around Kosovo. We also call for efforts to be made to enable the refugees and displaced persons to return safely to their homes and to guarantee their right to live in dignity, freedom, peace and security, in accordance with assurances contained in all relevant conventions.

The Islamic Group strongly condemns the inhumane Serbian practices in Kosovo and calls for their immediate cessation. At the same time, we support the international efforts made in this regard, particularly the diplomatic efforts made by the Secretary-General in search of a just and permanent political solution that would guarantee the political and social rights of the Kosovars and their right to security, and put an end to the policy of ethic cleansing of Yugoslavia. It should guarantee the right of the Kosovars to return to their homeland very soon, without any obstruction, under international protection.

Here, I should like to recall the statement by the Ministerial Meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosova, issued in Geneva on 7 April, which is included in document S/1999/394. I should also like to recall the meetings of the delegation of the OIC Contact Group with the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, Italy, Germany and Albania in their search for a just solution for the crisis that takes into consideration the social and political rights of the Kosovars and their right to security.

Political disputes and the divergent positions of some parties have blocked agreement on a resolution that would address the overall situation in Kosovo. But there could be no logic in such differences preventing the Security Council from adopting a resolution on the humanitarian situation of the Kosovars and of refugees and displaced persons in and around Kosovo in the hope of returning them to their homes before winter and of bringing an end to their suffering. In our view, nothing could have justified a delay in adopting such a resolution relating to the humanitarian aspects of the tragedy.

We joined in sponsoring the resolution the Council has just adopted because of our unequivocal belief that the cause of the people of Kosovo is a just one. We believe also in the need to bring to an end the suffering of that people as soon as possible. Here we convey our thanks and appreciation to the members of the Security Council for adopting this resolution.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Qatar for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Saudi Arabia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): It gives me pleasure, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I wish you all success as you carry out your duties. My appreciation goes also to your predecessor for the fine way in which he guided the work of the Council last month.

Ethnic cleansing, the expulsion of citizens and the destruction of property in Kosovo and the stripping away of the rights of its people bring shame upon all humanity. This goes against human rights, international law and divine principles, and violates international conventions relating to human rights and to the rights of refugees. It is therefore necessary for the international community to make a concerted effort to end this humanitarian crisis and to coordinate humanitarian relief efforts in order to ease the plight of the refugees and displaced persons.

The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expresses its great distress and deep concern at the suffering of the people of Kosovo caused by the scourge of acts of barbarism against children, women and old people, as well as at the confiscation of their rights and their property. My Government states its unswerving support for the right of the refugees to return to their homeland and to live in peace and security. It further calls upon the entire world earnestly to support the helpless, peace-loving people of Kosovo, which is the victim of the worst kind of ethnic cleansing and persecution at the hands of the Serb aggressors. The result of such action has been horrific suffering for the people of Kosovo both within and outside its territory. It has also resulted in great shortages of food, medicine, clothing and other basic human necessities.

The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been forthcoming in providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Kosovo. It has steadily sent urgent medical and food assistance to displaced Kosovars and a hospital has been established in Albania in that connection. A central committee has been set up to collect assistance for the Muslims of Kosovo. This committee includes a number of Saudi relief organizations including the Saudi Red Crescent. It coordinates its work with international organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia joined in sponsoring this evening's resolution because of its conviction that the people of Kosovo must be enabled to return to their homeland and to exercise their legitimate rights. The haemorrhage of refugees must be stanched. The genocidal practices of the Serbs must end. The Serbs must withdraw immediately from Kosovo. War criminals must be brought to justice.

I thank the Security Council; with the adoption of this resolution, it has shown that it stands for right, justice and peace.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Saudi Arabia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nejad Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May.

The people and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran were greatly distressed to learn that during the night of 7 May 1999 the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, came under attack, resulting in loss of life and property damage. We would like to convey our sincere condolences to the Government and the people of the People's Republic of China for the unfortunate loss of the lives of Chinese diplomats. Our condolences go particularly to those families which lost loved ones in this tragedy.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, I would like to take this opportunity to express once again the grave concerns not only of the members of the OIC Contact Group but of the whole international community, including the Islamic countries, at the escalating humanitarian tragedy that continues to unfold in and around Kosovo. The plight of the refugee and internally displaced Kosovar Albanians has shocked the conscience of humanity. We salute the neighbouring countries for so generously shouldering the burden of caring for the refugees. Members of the OIC Contact Group have been responsive to the imperative of burden-sharing at this difficult time and will continue on their course until the refugees and displaced persons return to their homes in peace and safety.

Moreover, the OIC Contact Group is deeply concerned about the ripple effect of the Kosovo crisis.

We believe that the continuation of the current Kosovo crisis could endanger the fragile peace and security in other parts of the Balkans. The grave concern of the OIC Contact Group about the forced flight of an increasing number of the Muslims from Sandjak and about their taking refuge in neighbouring countries, mainly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been conveyed to the Security Council.

The OIC Contact Group deeply regrets the failure of the Security Council to deal effectively with the crisis in Kosovo and to put an end to the plight of the Albanian Kosovars. Reiterating that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, we hope that the Security Council will accelerate its endeavours in order to carry out its responsibility under the United Nations Charter in an effective manner.

In view of all this, the OIC Contact Group has, since the onset of the crisis, taken a number of initiatives to help to contain the crisis and to find a peaceful solution. To this end, the OIC Contact Group decided in its Ministerial Meeting, held in Geneva on 7 April 1999, to strengthen contacts with all parties concerned, thus trying to promote a peaceful, just and lasting settlement of the Kosovo crisis. In this connection, a high-level delegation of the Contact Group, headed by the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in April visited a number of capitals, including Moscow, Bonn, Tirana and Rome. Exchanging views with officials of various countries, the OIC delegation explored ways and means of cooperating at the international level with a view to promoting a peaceful, just and lasting settlement of the Kosovo crisis.

We wish to recall the declaration of the Ministerial Meeting of the OIC Contact Group, held in Geneva on 7 April 1999; to confirm our strong condemnation of the policy of ethnic cleansing perpetrated by the Serbian authorities against the Albanian Kosovars; and to demand an immediate halt to all repressive actions undertaken in Kosovo by the Serbian authorities and the immediate withdrawal of the Serbian military and paramilitary forces from Kosovo.

In its statement dated 22 April 1999, the OIC Contact Group expressed support for the proposals made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 9 April, in which he called upon the Yugoslav authorities to undertake five commitments to allow a lasting political solution to be found through diplomacy to the crisis in Kosovo. We also support the latest initiatives of the Secretary-General, including his consultations with concerned officials in various capitals, his appointment of two envoys and the decision to undertake a humanitarian-needs assessment in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, starting in Kosovo.

The OIC Contact Group lends its full support to all diplomatic efforts and initiatives in search of a just and durable political solution which would ensure, *inter alia*, an end to the Yugoslav policy of ethnic cleansing and the swift, safe and unimpeded return of all Kosovar refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes under international protection.

While appreciating the efforts being made by the international community and recalling the mobilization already underway in the Islamic countries to assist the Kosovar refugees, we emphasize the continued necessity of providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees in and around Kosovo with a view to alleviating their sufferings.

In light of the increasing and continuing plight of the refugees and displaced persons in and around Kosovo, the OIC Contact Group decided to lend its full support to the resolution submitted by the Caucus of the Non-Aligned Movement and cosponsored it in order to underline the fact that the worsening humanitarian crisis in and around Kosovo requires immediate and serious international attention.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I begin my statement by extending my most sincere condolences to the Government of China for the casualties suffered in the bombing of its Embassy on 7 May.

Faced with a serious escalation of the crisis in Kosovo and the Security Council's inability to take steps to strengthen its credibility in the maintenance of international peace and security that would allow us to achieve a political settlement to end the humanitarian tragedy and the acts of ethnic cleansing perpetrated by Serb forces against the inhabitants of that province, whatever their ethnic origin, there is an increasing need to support humanitarian action to ease the suffering of

refugees and displaced persons, who have been provoked by these events to undertake an exodus.

Egypt is fully convinced that the provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees and displaced persons is within the competence of the Secretary-General. The deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Kosovo and its grave implications for international peace and security; the urgent need for the international community to provide timely humanitarian assistance to the victims of these events throughout the States of the region and to ensure that it reach those for whom it is intended; and the need for a comprehensive assessment by the mission which the Secretary-General has sent are all reasons that have compelled Egypt, together with other States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group on Bosnia and Kosovo, to endorse the resolution which the Security Council has adopted today. We are convinced that it will be supported by all Members of the United Nations.

We believe that the resolution is exclusively humanitarian in its objectives. We wished to distinguish this issue from the current political problems and the various ways and means of solving them, although we made certain amendments aimed at globalizing the resolution so that it might be adopted unanimously. However, despite the urgent humanitarian nature of the resolution, it was delayed for political reasons, albeit without affecting the unanimity of the vote today. The clear message which the sponsors of the resolution — in particular the members of the OIC Contact Group on Bosnia and Kosovo, including Egypt — wish to send to the international community is that the lack of a defined role for the Security Council in the search for a peaceful settlement, engendered by its inability to discharge its responsibilities for international peace and security, cannot justify ignoring the urgent humanitarian situation in the region. Thus, the international community, especially the United Nations, must step up its activities to end the humanitarian suffering of the victims of the situation and of those States that have sheltered a large number of refugees and displaced persons, thereby assuming a significant additional material and logistical burden.

In this regard, we wish to thank the Secretary-General for his particular efforts, as well as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the other humanitarian institutions involved.

We hope that the Security Council will be able to overcome its current difficulties and reassert its role in reaching a comprehensive political settlement of the situation in order to guarantee the return; security and well-being of all displaced persons and refugees under international control. In the meantime, we appeal to the international community to grant all possible assistance to displaced persons in Kosovo and the States that have suffered in the exodus. We hope that this clear message will meet with the wholehearted approval of the international community.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your effective ongoing presidency of the Security Council. Let me also acknowledge the excellent manner in which your predecessor, Ambassador Dejammet of France, performed his presidential duties last month.

As we are all still in the middle of, and deeply distressed at, the situation resulting from the strikes by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade on 7 May 1999, I cannot but bring to the Council's attention the position of my Government, which expresses its shock at the reports of the casualties and damage suffered by the Embassy. Our deepest condolences go to the Government of the People's Republic of China and to the families of those who were killed or injured.

Though the investigation into the causes of this grave incident is still under way and its complete and final assessment is still pending, one immediate conclusion is self-evident for my delegation: all military activities in and around the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should be stopped. In this context, I would like to stress the words "all military activities", which, according to the plan formulated by President Kuchma of Ukraine, implies the end of military actions by the regular, security and paramilitary forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Kosovo Liberation Army, as well as the simultaneous cessation, or at least suspension, of NATO air strikes on the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

From the very first day, if not hour, of military activities against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Ukraine has continuously called for an end to the use of force and for finding political means of resolving the Kosovo problem. By so doing, we tried to warn all the

parties involved of the unpredictable and dire consequences of such a course. It is regrettable that our concerns, echoed by many other countries, were not heeded.

That is why the delegation of Ukraine would like to appeal to all the members of the Security Council — the only United Nations body to bear primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security — immediately to intervene in order to put an end to the military actions, which continue to claim more and more innocent victims and stand in the way of an eventual political settlement of the Kosovo problem. We fully share the conviction of the United Nations Secretary-General, reiterated in the wake of the tragedy of 7 May 1999, that "an urgent political solution must be found to the present crisis in the region".

Our delegation is satisfied that after a rather prolonged period of uncertainty, the Security Council is gradually returning to an understanding of the urgent need to undertake every possible measure to put an end to the hostilities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and to avert the impending humanitarian catastrophe in wider Europe. We consider the resolution just adopted by the Security Council as a practical step in the right direction.

We believe that quite soon the Security Council will be adopting a decision outlining the framework of a political solution to the Kosovo crisis. In this regard, we welcome the general principles on a political solution to the Kosovo crisis agreed upon at the recent G-8 ministerial meeting in Bonn, which are consonant with the Ukrainian proposals on this issue.

While concentrating our common efforts on the search for a political solution, we should devote appropriate attention to the critical humanitarian situation in the region, which threatens to become a large-scale humanitarian catastrophe, unprecedented in Europe since the end of the Second World War.

What should we do to prevent such an unfortunate development? It is important and urgent to find the right answers to that question. Let us ponder some simple and obvious questions regarding the humanitarian situation in and around Kosovo, such as how and when we can ensure the voluntary return and life in dignity of the Kosovo refugees and displaced persons, given that the province's infrastructure has been completely destroyed. There are almost no safe houses, hospitals, oil refineries, power plants, schools or roads left in Kosovo. Since there was no sowing in the province in spring, there will be no harvest this fall. What about the approaching cold weather, which usually comes to the mountainous terrain of Kosovo in September? What about the humanitarian demining problem? Ways to address these so-called minor and collateral problems are not being sought. Instead, one can see that military activities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are not decreasing — on the contrary. Is it not high time to stop and really look at the critical plight of the Kosovars and at that of the peoples of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Macedonia, Albania and of other countries affected by the crisis?

In this context, we welcome the timely proposal by the Secretary-General to dispatch a humanitarian needs assessment mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We urge the Yugoslav authorities and NATO States to ensure the safety of the United Nations humanitarian personnel involved in that mission and of all the other international humanitarian workers who are already doing their noble job in Kosovo. Ukraine also believes that the two-day high-level meeting on the Balkan crisis held by the Secretary-General in Geneva on 13 and 14 May 1999 will result in the elaboration of a more effective and coherent strategy for the United Nations system's response to the disastrous situation in the region. We praise the strenuous efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and of all the other international humanitarian relief organizations currently operating in Albania and the Republic of Macedonia, as well as those States participating in the humanitarian evacuation programme and those providing humanitarian assistance individually.

Notwithstanding its own difficult economic situation, which, in fact, is complicated by economic losses caused by the ongoing military actions in Yugoslavia, Ukraine is contributing to international efforts by providing humanitarian aid to refugees from Kosovo. In accordance with the Government of Ukraine's decision of 5 April 1999, a number of Ukrainian transport convoys have been dispatched to the Republic of Macedonia and Albania to deliver humanitarian aid. This humanitarian assistance was offered in the form of food, medicine, bandages and other first-aid materials, as well as household equipment totalling about $360,000. A few days ago, the Parliament of Ukraine adopted a resolution to render humanitarian aid to the peoples of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Other forms of humanitarian assistance to those affected by the Kosovo crisis, including the acceptance of a number of children of refugees, are now being considered in Ukraine.

In conclusion, I wish to express the hope that common sense will finally prevail, that hostilities will cease in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, that a political solution to the Kosovo problem will be approved by a resolution of the Security Council, and that the severe consequences of the humanitarian catastrophe in and around Kosovo will be eliminated. How much longer will it take for this to happen? What additional price will all of us have to pay for any further delay in achieving a comprehensive settlement of the Kosovo crisis? We in Ukraine hope that this settlement will be achieved as soon as possible.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Ukraine for the kind words he addressed to me.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Belarus. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sychov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus, as a State whose history is connected to destructive wars and environmental catastrophes, highly values and welcomes the fact that the Security Council is giving priority attention to this question. Indeed, a solution to the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo and the neighbouring regions is the key to the establishment of stability not only in the area of the conflict, but in the Balkan region as a whole.

In evaluating the situation in Kosovo, we continue to believe that the major reason for the worsening humanitarian situation and the massive influx of refugees was the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military action undertaken, outside the Security Council and in violation of generally accepted norms of international law, against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. There is a great deal of evidence for this today, and I think that members of the Security Council and the representatives of other United Nations Member States present in this Chamber know this full well. There is aggression today against a sovereign State which is having serious consequences. The latest graphic example of this was the attack on the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Belgrade, which resulted in the loss of diplomatic lives and significant material damage.

Every day we see new evidence of the destruction of the national economy and infrastructure of Yugoslavia and the suffering of victims among the civilian population. Today the victims amount to more than 1,000 killed and approximately 4,500 injured. There are victims among the civilian population as a result of the use of cluster bombs, in violation of international norms. Once again we hear from NATO that supposedly this was a mistake.

The world community cannot remain indifferent, simply accepting the mounting catastrophe. The Republic of Belarus believes that the humanitarian crisis cannot be stopped in the context of continuing military escalation. This contradicts the very logic of peacekeeping. We sternly condemn the aggression against a sovereign State. The complexity of the Balkan situation lies in the fact that some political and military leaders of NATO are playing the Kosovo card, not acting at all in the interests of the Albanian or the Serbian people, but only in their own self-interest through the assertion of their superior force in the practice of inter-State relations.

In this connection, we once again call upon the Council to take the necessary steps as soon as possible to halt the military aggression and bloodshed so that political means can be used to find a way out of the situation acceptable to all sides, a situation fraught with irreversible consequences for the fate of all mankind.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Cuba. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba)(*spoke in Spanish*): It is encouraging that the Security Council is using its meagre powers to at least tackle the terrible humanitarian situation that has been created in the Balkans. It is also encouraging that this is occurring at the initiative of the non-aligned caucus of the Council. I must say that my delegation deeply shares the legitimate concern for the victims of this conflict — all those who have died, the wounded, the orphans, the mothers who have lost their children, all those suffering from hunger, those who have lost their homes, their hospitals and their schools, those who have no means of support, the many lives lost and the dozens wounded caused by the bombing in Korisa only a few hours ago.

Cuba shares the suffering of the hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons and has offered its full cooperation to alleviate their suffering. In response to the information from the United States authorities regarding the decision to use the Guantánamo base, part of Cuban territory, which it is occupying illegally and against the will of our people, to temporarily shelter 20,000 Kosovar refugees, our country agreed not

only to that number, but also to even larger numbers if possible, offering its willingness to cooperate in caring for those refugees with our hospital services, medical personnel and available supplies. With the humility, altruism and discretion that characterize real humanitarian action, Cuba has offered as long ago as 5 April to cooperate by contributing 1,000 doctors, completely free of charge, to take care of the Kosovar refugees.

Each refugee is a human tragedy that cannot be reduced to cold statistics, much less be used for political propaganda and headlines in the press. It would be useful to have official and exhaustive information on how many refugees have been accepted and under what conditions by those who are the very ones responsible for what has occurred. With their vast resources and many sins, NATO members, as the figures show, appear more inclined to create refugees rather than receive them.

Neither can it be forgotten that terrible humanitarian crises are occurring, particularly in Africa, without receiving the necessary attention of the United Nations, the international community and the press. Resources earmarked for dealing with the emergency needs of 11 million people in Africa are less than those already arranged for some of the Balkan countries.

It is a serious omission that the resolution just adopted does not say a single word about the urgency of stopping the bombing of Yugoslavia by the United States and NATO, which has caused hundreds of civilian deaths and thousands of wounded and a real humanitarian catastrophe. The acts of genocide in the form of deliberate bombing of civilian targets and systematic actions depriving the population of its means of support must cease immediately. No type of agreement can be accepted, nor should the Security Council adopt in any way the so-called agreement of the Group of Eight, as long as the bombing continues.

Cuba reiterates its vigorous condemnation of the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, which caused deaths, wounded and the destruction of the building, and reaffirms the need for an impartial, urgent and exhaustive investigation, the immediate publication of its results, the severe punishment of those responsible and the Security Council's continuing attention to the matter, an obligation that falls within its competence in compliance with the United Nations Charter.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Albania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nesho (Albania): Albania strongly supports the resolution before the Security Council today. We would like to express special thanks to the delegations of Bahrain and Malaysia as the initiators of this resolution, as well as to the other sponsors.

Albanians take a great interest in this resolution, as we greatly appreciate all the efforts of the international community to stop a humanitarian catastrophe in the making. This catastrophe is the largest in Europe since the Second World War. Approximately 500,000 deportees have entered Albania up to this point, after their hopeless effort to remain in their ethnic lands and home. Thus the number of deportees has been increased to 1 million people since the beginning of the ethnic-cleansing policy and the genocide in Kosovo.

These people were pushed to leave Kosovo as a result of the monstrous crimes of the Serbian criminal regime of Belgrade, which is following a systematic policy of torture, killing, massacre, mutilation, rape, deliberate destruction of property and livestock, and other despicable crimes against humanity. We do not know about the fate of more than 100,000 Albanians, while thousands and thousands are separated from their families or are being used as human shields or blood pools for the Serbian war thugs. Endless trains full of hopeless deportees are emptying the Albanian territories, which are now literarily burnt and full of mass graves. This is the fate of the hundreds of thousands of Albanians from Kosovo, deported by force to Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia. Their only hope is that the international community will stop their endless suffering.

The Albanian Government has already received the Albanian deportees and is giving them continuous assistance. Albania is currently cooperating with all those who are providing assistance and highly appreciates their help. We would like to particularly thank the United States Government; the Governments of all the member States of the European Union, as well as the European Union itself; the Australian, Turkish, Pakistani, Norwegian and Japanese Governments; and the Governments of Arab countries for their great assistance to the efforts to relieve the suffering of the deportees. We attach great importance to the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as the lead agency in the relief efforts. My Government reiterates its willingness to cooperate with all the United Nations agencies in order to accomplish the enormous work that lies ahead.

As of now the Albanian people in Albania have shown great support for the plight of their brothers and sisters from Kosovo. More than 70 per cent of the deportees are being taken care of by simple Albanian families, and we believe that they deserve great recognition and support.

It is quite unfortunate that the international community and the United Nations are now having to make an enormous effort to heal a new wound that stems from an old crime that started 10 years ago in the Balkans. To the humanitarian catastrophe in Bosnia, where hundreds of thousands lost their lives and more than 2 million refugees left their homes, is now being added an additional chapter of Albanian suffering, with 1 million deportees and thousands of deaths. At the same time as the Security Council was adopting resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998) and 1203 (1998), a country that pretends to be a member of the United Nations was responding with ethnic cleansing and genocide and requesting that its sovereignty be respected by the United Nations. As if the expulsion of Albanians were not enough, artillery shells are being fired from Serbia towards the territory of another sovereign country.

We heard today that some returning refugees have been killed. We do not know where some of the members have gotten this information, but to this day no refugee — I repeat, not one refugee — has returned to Kosovo. It may be that some Albanians have been killed by mistake; however, Albanians are deeply convinced that this tragedy and plague cannot be stopped without the assistance of the civilized world, which is protecting human values.

The Albanian people strongly believe in the value of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission and actions. NATO is today saving exactly the same values that the United Nations was created to defend, and the Albanian people regret that the United Nations is not able to deliver the same message due to the hypocrisy and the obstacles created by some of its Members.

Albania welcomes any initiative of the international community that could solve the crisis of Kosovo, that could stop the humanitarian catastrophe and that respects the freedom of the people who believe so much in the principles of this Organization.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker on my list is Mr. Ahmad Haji Hosseini, Deputy Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hosseini (Organization of the Islamic Conference): On behalf of Ambassador Mokhtar Lamani, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, who is unavoidably absent from here at this time, I take the floor to express our serious concern over the crisis in Kosovo and the harm and suffering this has unleashed upon the innocent people of Kosovo.

Since the arbitrary termination of the autonomy of Kosovo by the Belgrade authorities in 1989, we, together with the international community, have watched with great distress the Serbian acts of atrocities against the innocent and hard-working people of Kosovo and the campaigns of ethnic cleansing that have been reminiscent of the preceding sinister acts against the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina that were also committed by the Serbs.

Regrettably, the Bosnian experience has failed to teach the Serbs an important lesson of history, which is that when a nation tries to keep another in the ditch, it does so by also staying with it in the ditch.

It is relevant to remind this Council that the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Contact Group on Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosova, meeting at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Geneva last month, regretted that the Security Council has been unable to discharge its responsibility in Kosovo in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. It reiterated that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and that in carrying out its duties in accordance with this responsibility, the Council shall be looked upon to act on behalf of the Members of the United Nations.

The ministers expressed their solidarity with the Kosovars in their present hour of need and, among other things, undertook to contribute to the monitoring and peacekeeping operations in Kosovo as part of the international peacekeeping efforts.

Since the Geneva meeting, the diplomatic efforts of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OIC Contact Group, aimed at finding a viable solution to the crisis in Kosovo, have been intense and have led to the Contact Group's support of the resolution just adopted by the

Council — a resolution initiated by the Permanent Representatives of Bahrain and Malaysia and presented to the Council by the Permanent Representative of Gambia, all members of the OIC.

The resolution addresses, in particular, the humanitarian aspect of the crisis in Kosovo, which is of crucial concern at this time. By its nature, the resolution allows the Security Council to act in unity and without controversy, which may otherwise have posed possible constraints on its ability to act quickly in the matter in fulfilment of its responsibilities at this grave moment.

The response just demonstrated by members will hopefully be a significant factor in rescuing the people of Kosovo from the agony and suffering they are undergoing at this time.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): In the light of the discussion, and bearing in mind the content of the resolution just adopted, I wish to make a few observations.

The resolution is important primarily for two reasons. First, it carefully defines the priorities of humanitarian action, which require the full political support of the Security Council. It defines an approach which merits political commitment and the sustained practical effort of the States Members of the United Nations. In addition to the inherent value of humanitarianism, the action dealt with in the resolution also represents a political priority. Most United Nations Member States already understand that. However, an additional emphasis on this priority, pronounced formally by the Security Council, adds to the understanding of the priority nature of these tasks.

The discussion tonight has shown that there are distortions of fact and misinterpretations of international law. Therefore, it is important that the resolution adopted tonight set priorities correctly and clearly. That is the first of the two basic factors of this resolution's relevance.

Secondly, the resolution contains an important element of potential which could help the Security Council restore its role under the Charter of the United Nations. Several members of the Security Council have referred in their statements to that potential. The resolution addresses a number of areas of humanitarian activity where humanitarian and security or political concerns meet. These issues need to be addressed both at the level of practical humanitarian action and at the level of political policy-making. Thus, they remain among the important concerns of the Security Council.

Finally, the resolution addresses the search for a comprehensive solution. This solution will need to have an adequate political framework. In this context, the resolution refers to the recent initiative of the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Eight countries. The statement made by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Eight on 6 May contains a comprehensive set of basic concepts from which a search for peace can start. These concepts need further elaboration and refinement, and the Security Council should play a role in this process. We hope that a determined effort in that direction will start before too long. Such a process will also enable the Security Council to address the causes of humanitarian crises, to which some speakers tonight have referred.

We believe that that approach is a correct one. It is gradual and not yet fully supported. The abstentions in the voting tonight testify to this lack of complete support. However, we would like to appeal to all Council members to understand that the unity and resolve of the entire international community are the essential conditions for the success of the efforts for peace, and we believe that the resolution adopted tonight is a relevant contribution to that end.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.55 a.m.